

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend Claim 31 as follows.

1. - 29. (Cancelled)

30. (Currently Amended) A method of reducing photoresist poisoning when the photoresist is a chemically amplified positive photoresist which produces an acid in pattern areas of the photoresist which are to be removed upon development, comprising: controlling the surface composition of a substrate underlying said photoresist by plasma treatment of said surface, wherein a hydrogen or a helium plasma is applied to remove a plurality of OH groups present on said surface of said substrate prior to application of a photoresist over said substrate.

31. (Original) A method in accordance with Claim 30, wherein said plasma treatment employs a plasma generation power input including more than one frequency.

32. (Original) A method in accordance with Claim 30 or Claim 31, wherein said substrate underlying said photoresist is a DARC.

33. (Original) A method in accordance with Claim 32, wherein said DARC is an inorganic DARC.

34. (Original) A method in accordance with Claim 33, wherein said DARC is a silicon-containing DARC, and wherein said plasma used for treatment is a hydrogen-containing plasma.

35. (Original) A method in accordance with Claim 32, wherein said DARC is an organic DARC, and wherein said plasma used for treatment is a hydrogen-containing plasma.

36. (Original) A method in accordance with Claim 32, wherein said plasma used for treatment is a helium-containing plasma.

37. (Original) A method in accordance with Claim 33, wherein said DARC is a silicon-containing DARC, and wherein said plasma used for treatment is a helium-containing plasma.

38. (Original) A method in accordance with Claim 32, wherein said DARC is an organic DARC, and wherein said plasma used for treatment is a helium-containing plasma.

39. - 40. (Cancelled)